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Staggers Tells FCC to Halt a Wiretap

United Press International

Rep. Harley O. Staggers (D-W.Va.) told officials of the Federal Communications Commission yesterday that they were assuming a "big brother" attitude in tapping the telephone of an FCC employee suspected of leaking confidential information.

"We have got to stop it in government," exclaimed Staggers, chairman of the House Commerce Committee. "If we don't, we'll have Big Brother for sure."

Staggers summoned FCC Chairman Dean Burch and other agency officials to ex-

plain why Burch authorized installation in 1970 of an extension to eavesdrop on the unnamed employee's telephone. Burch conceded it was done and defended the action.

But Staggers said, "It appears that there was no order," in apparent violation of wiretap provisions of a 1968 law passed by Congress.

Burch said the incident was the first and only time telephone conversations were monitored by use of special equipment and said it was a "reasonable technique" for checking on eye-witness ac-

counts of possible leaking of confidential FCC material.

"It did not seem to me that ... an outsider had any right not to have his calls monitored and his conversations overheard on a commission extension," Burch told the committee.

"There was not the slightest intent to conceal anything, Mr. Chairman," Burch told Staggers.

Staggers told a reporter afterward that he did not intend to press the matter further. But he said he wanted all gov-

ernment agencies to be on notice that "the only thing I am interested in is that it is stopped."

Cliburn Starts Tour In Russia May 23

MOSCOW, May 16 (AP)—Pianist Van Cliburn will begin an eight-concert tour in the Soviet Union on May 23, the night after President Nixon arrives, and some Soviet sources say the President will attend the tall Texan's first performance.